Judaism

RE and Worldviews

How does remembering maintain Jewish identity?

Very Important Vocabulary:

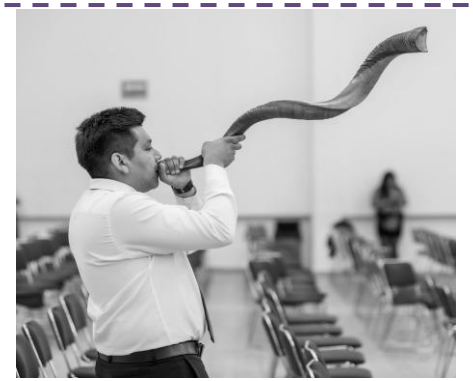
Rosh Hashanah: Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year and marks the beginning of the High Holy Days.
Yom Kippur: Yom Kippur is the Day of Atonement and occurs shortly after Rosh Hashanah.
Repentance: Repentance means feeling truly sorry for a mistake and trying to make things right.
Shofar: A shofar is a horn blown in the synagogue.
Synagogue: A synagogue is where Jewish people meet to worship.
Purim: Purim celebrates the events of the Book of Esther.
Esther: Esther bravely revealed her identity and stopped Haman's plan to harm the Jews.
Megillah: Megillah is the story of Esther
Hanukkah: Hanukkah commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem and the miracle of the oil lasting eight days.
Menorah (hanukkiah): The menorah is lit each night to remember Hanukkah,

What is Rosh Hashanah and how do Jews celebrate it in different ways?

Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year and marks the beginning of the High Holy Days. It is a time of reflection, repentance and thinking about one's actions over the previous year. Jewish families celebrate in diverse ways across the world, but common practices include eating sweet foods (such as apples and honey) and attending synagogue to hear the shofar. The festival emphasises renewal and hope, showing how shared traditions help maintain Jewish identity despite cultural variation.

How do Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur work together to help Jews reflect and remember?

Yom Kippur is the Day of Atonement and occurs shortly after Rosh Hashanah. It is considered the holiest day in Judaism and focuses on asking for forgiveness from God and others. Many Jews fast, pray and attend synagogue. Together, these festivals emphasise remembering past actions and making positive change, reinforcing moral identity and community responsibility.





What does the story of Esther and Haman teach about remembering the past?

The story of Esther, told in the Book of Esther (Megillah), explains how Jewish people were saved from persecution in Persia. Queen Esther bravely revealed her identity and stopped Haman's plan to harm the Jews. The story highlights courage, identity and survival. Remembering this story helps Jewish communities reflect on resilience and the importance of standing up against injustice.

How do Jews celebrate Purim today and why is remembering this story important?

Purim celebrates the events of the Book of Esther. Today, Jews read the Megillah, give gifts of food (mishloach manot), donate to charity and dress in costumes. The celebration is joyful but rooted in remembering survival and identity. It reinforces community bonds and highlights the importance of helping others.

What is the story of Hanukkah and how does it influence Jewish identity today?

Hanukkah commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem and the miracle of the oil lasting eight days. The menorah (hanukkiah) is lit each night to remember this event. Although it is not the holiest Jewish festival, it has strong cultural significance, especially in the Jewish diaspora. It highlights themes of resilience, faith and maintaining identity in challenging circumstances.

How does remembering help Jews maintain their identity?

Remembering is central to Jewish identity through festivals, stories and rituals. Events such as Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Purim and Hanukkah all involve recalling history, reflecting on behaviour and maintaining traditions. This continuity connects Jewish people across time and place. Remembering also shapes values, strengthens community and reinforces a shared sense of identity.